

Message Text

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12

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EUR-12 NIC-01 SAJ-01 SAM-01 OMB-01

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05 TRSE-00 /076 W

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P R 100917Z MAR 75

FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4104

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

USLO PEKING

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, CH, CB

SUBJECT: PEOPLE'S DAILY "COMMENTATOR" ON THE CAMBODIA SITUATION

REF: HONG KONG 2272; HONG KONG 2222

SUMMARY: REFLECTING ALMOST A MIRROR IMAGE OF CHINA'S PUBLIC ATTITUDE ON VIETNAM PRIOR TO THE SIGNING OF THE PARIS ACCORDS, A PEOPLE'S DAILY " COMMENTATOR" ARTICLE OF MARCH 9 FORECAST INEVITABLE VICTORY FOR THE INSURGENT CAMBODIAN FORCES AND, MORE IN SORROW THAN IN ANGER, ROUNDLY CRITICIZES CONTINUING US SUPPORT FOR THE LON NOL GOVERNMENT. COMMENTATOR DECLARES " THE CHINESE PEOPLE'S RESOLUTE SUPPORT" FOR THE STAND TAKEN IN SIHANOUK'S MARCH 7 STATEMENT DENOUNCING US INTERFERENCE IN CAMBODIA. TOUCHING ALL BASES, THE AUTHOR ALSO CALLS FOR THE US TO ACT IN COMPLIANCE WITH KHIEU SAMPHAN'S SECOND NATIONAL CAMBODIAN CONGRESS "IF THE US REALLY WANTS TO SOLVE THE CAMBODIAN QUESTION" STATEMENT. LINKAGE OF THE US ROLE IN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CAMBODIA WITH CURRENT US-CHINA RELATIONS IS AVOIDED BY

COMMENTATOR, WHO CONCLUDES BY DEPLORING THE US FAILURE TO MASTER THE LESSONS OF HISTORY. END SUMMARY.

1. GENERAL PRC MEDIA COVERAGE OF RECENT EVENTS IN CAMBODIA AND ESPECIALLY THE AUTHORITATIVE PEOPLE'S DAILY COMMENTATOR ARTICLE OF MARCH 9(CARRIED BY NCNA THE SAME DAY) ARE REMINISCENT OF PEKING'S ATTITUDE AND TREATMENT OF VIENTAM ON THE EVE OF THE SIGNING OF THE PARIS ACCORDS. THE VOLUME OF REPORTS ON CAMBODIA IN PRC MEDIA IS UNEXCEPTIONAL, AND THEY ARE DRAWN LARGELY FROM INSURGENT NEWS RELEASES.

2. PROBABLY CONSIDERING VICTORY FOR THE INSURGENT FORCES AS IMMINENT, A RESTRAINED COMMENTATOR POINTS TO THE "INSPIRING CHANGE" TAKING PLACE IN CAMBODIA AS AUGURING COMING "GREATER VICTORIES OF THE CAMBODIAN PEOPLE." AS AT THE TIME OF THE PARIS ACCORDS, THE ARTICLE DEPICTS THE US AS ACTING OUT OF DESPERATION. MORE IN SORROW THAN IN ANGER, COMMENTATOR PROCEEDS TO ROUNDLY CRITICIZE CONTINUING US SUPPORT FOR THE LON NOL GOVERNMENT, BUT AVOIDS MENTION OF PRC AID TO THE INSURGENTS. THE ARTICLE SUGGESTS THAT THE US BILLION DOLLAR PLUS INVESTMENT IN THE LON NOL GOVERNMENT OVER THE PAST FIVE YEARS AND RECENT US EFFORTS TO OBTAIN ADDITIONAL DOLLARS AND WEAPONS ARE ALL IN VAIN AS THE LON NOL FORCES SUFFER INCREASINGLY DISASTROUS DEFEATS WHILE INSURGENT FORCES GROW PROGRESSIVELY STRONGER. IN THE ARTICLE'S SOLE DIRECT REFERENCE TO NEGOTIATIONS COMMENTATOR REJECTS US CALLS FOR "SO-CALLED' NEGOTIATIONS" AS "SHEER IDLE FANCY." IN A SIMILAR FASHION, IT TERMS US PROFESSIONS OF TRYING TO SOLVE THE CAMBODIAN QUESTION AS "DECEITFUL TALKS."

3. IN THE ONLY DIRECT CITATION OF SIHANOUK BY NAME, COMMENTATOR REFERS TO HIM AS "HEAD OF STATE OF CAMBODIA" AND DECLARES THE CHINESE PEOPLE "RESOLUTELY SUPPORT" THE "SOLEMN STAND" HE TOOK IN HIS MARCH 7 STATEMENT (NCNA, MARCH 7) STRONGLY DENOUNCING THE US ACT OF AGGRESSION IN STEPPING UP INTERFERENCE IN CAMBODIA. THE ARTICLE CLAIMS THE US REFUSAL "TO GIVE UP ITS AGGRESSION AND INTERFERENCE IN CAMBODIA" AND REFUSAL "TO STOP SUPPORT AND AID TO THE LON NOL CLIQUE" ARE THE VERY REASONS THE CAMBODIA QUESTION HAS REMAINED UNSOLVED. PRUDENTLY TOUCHING ALL BASES, BUT WITHOUT DETAILING THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SPECIFIC DEMANDS IN EITHER THE SIHANOUK STATEMENT OR THAT SIGNED BY KHIEU SAMPHAN, THE ARTICLE ASSERTS THAT "IF THE US REALLY WANTS TO SOLVE THE CAMBODIAN QUESTION..ALL IT HAS TO DO IS TO STOP AN ONCE ALL ITS ACTS OF INTERFERENCE AND AGGRESSION AGAINST THE CAMBODIAN PEOPLE TO 'ENABLE THE CAMBODIAN NATION AND PEOPLE TO SOLVE THEIR OWN INTERNAL AFFAIRS WITHOUT FOREIGN INTERFERENCE' JUST AS POINTED OUT IN THE STATEMENT ADOPTED BY THE SECOND NATIONAL CONGRESS OF CAMBODIA."

(NCNA FEBRUARY 27 ALSO CARRIED WITHOUT COMMENT THE TEXT OF THE KHIEU SAMPHAN APPROVED STATEMENT.)

4. THE ARTICLE CONTENDS THAT THE US DESPATCH OF WARSHIPS TO THE GULF OF SIAM AND TH ALERTING OF US MARINES IN OKINAWA REPRESENTS AN ATTEMPT TO "THREATEN THE CAMBODIAN PEOPLE." HOWEVER, THE ARTICLE CAREFULLY AVOIDS ANY LINKAGE OF TE US ROLE IN CAMBODIA AND CURRENT SINO-US RELATIONS. COMMENTATOR IN CONCLUSION SUGGESTS THAT A PARALLEL CAN BE DRAWN BETWEEN THE PRESENT US POSITION ON CAMBODIA AND THE US ATTITUDE TOWARD ACCEPTANCE OF THE PRC VICTORY IN 1949. RECALLING THEN SECRETARY OF STATE ACHESON'S "MOANING RELUCTANTLY" THAT THE PRC VICTORY WAS "THE UNFORTUNATE BUT INESCAPABLE FACT," COMMENTATOR DEPICTS TH US AS HAVING FAILED TO LEARN FROM HISTORY.

5. COMMENT:THE COMMENTARY, WHEN PLACED AGAINST A BACKGROUND OF INTENSIFIED FIGHTING AROUND PHNOM PENH, THE WAKE OF A FLURRY OF DIPLOMATIC ACTIVITY BY IENG SARY AND INTERVIEWS OF SIHANOUK, AND STEPPED UP SOVIET COMMENTARIES SUPPORTING THE KHMER ROUGE FORCES (MOCOW 3039), SEEMS TO REPRESENT THE MINIMAL RESPONSE OF A CHINA ANXIOUS TO MAINTAIN ITS INFLUENCE WITH BOTH SIHANOUK AND THE KHMER ROUGE.
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